



# STATE OF ALABAMA STATE BANKING DEPARTMENT



**For Immediate Release:**  
**Friday, September 16, 2005**

**CONTACT:**  
Trabo Reed  
(334)242-3507 or  
[trabo.reed@banking.alabama.gov](mailto:trabo.reed@banking.alabama.gov)

## **Alabama Banking Superintendent Assesses Restoration of Banking Services in Areas Hit by Hurricane Katrina**

MONTGOMERY— Alabama Banking Superintendent John Harrison announced that steady progress is being made in restoring banking services for consumers impacted by Hurricane Katrina.

Harrison noted that all Alabama banks were back in operation within two to three days after Katrina's landfall. "While we still have a handful of bank branches not operating in Alabama, we are very fortunate that all of our banks were back up and running so quickly after the hurricane," Harrison said. "Our department's focus is now on getting our Alabama banks' branches along the Mississippi Gulf Coast and in the Greater New Orleans area back in operation and on getting evacuees access to their funds."

Harrison praised the Federal Reserve Board and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) for their responsiveness and cooperation with state officials in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which struck the coastal areas of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. "The partnership we have with our counterparts at the FDIC, the Federal Reserve Bank, and with the Mississippi and Louisiana banking departments has really paid off for our efforts to assist the financial needs of all three states' citizens," Harrison said.

Harrison stated: "The great progress that the Mississippi and Louisiana banks, large and small, are making in restoring full services is encouraging." He said: "Consumers, no matter how far they are from home, should have confidence in their hometown financial institutions and their ability to get and maintain access to their funds. FDIC insurance, the banks' required backup systems, and bank disaster recovery procedures make a remarkably resilient financial system in which consumers can have confidence."

The Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi Banking Departments, FDIC and other bank regulators have encouraged banks to help hurricane victims, by waiving ATM fees for customers and non-customers; increasing ATM daily cash withdrawal limits; easing restrictions on cashing out-of-state and non-customer checks as well as waiving check cashing fees; waiving overdraft fees as a result of paycheck interruption; allowing loan customers to defer or skip some payments; and waiving late fees for credit card and other loan balances due to interruption of mail. Harrison also reminds banks that were not directly affected by Katrina to remember the needs of non-customers and evacuees that will need banks' assistance throughout the State of Alabama.

*--More--*

*Add...1*

Harrison reminds consumers to protect their Social Security, bank and credit card numbers and other personal information, especially in response to unsolicited requests from strangers. Identity thieves and others may try to take advantage of the crisis by defrauding consumers and tricking victims and those trying to assist into divulging personal information.

Consumers with questions about accessing bank accounts, lost records, ATM cards, direct deposit or how to reach their bank can contact the Alabama Banking Department toll-free at 1-866-465-2279 or the FDIC toll-free at 1-877-ASK-FDIC (1-877-275-3342). The Alabama Banking Department Web site [www.banking.alabama.gov](http://www.banking.alabama.gov) and the FDIC's Web site, [www.fdic.gov](http://www.fdic.gov), also have helpful consumer information.

# # # #